

unity in the other religions—only among men before God.

He presupposes that God's deed in Jesus Christ is objective. But it is not obvious to non-Christians as an objective act of God. It is subjective-objective truth. I wish he could have explained this subjective-objective truth idea in this book so non-Christians could read it with more profit.

In addition, I find difficulty in understanding his doctrine of the Church in the concrete situation. He is right in saying that mission is the first function of the Church and that the Church must be united. But how is it put into the concrete situation (How does it become reality?—this may be a better way to say it.)? There is no answer in this book. We must wait until the Church of South India becomes a true Church solving its problems of creed, eucharist and other ritual matters.

Though there are some minor difficulties, this book is certainly an important book on "Ecumenical Theology of Mission". (Tadakazu Hara)

Stephen Neill, *CHRISTIAN FAITH AND OTHER FAITHS* The Christian Dialogue with Other Religions, London: Oxford University Press, 1961, 241 pp.

Bishop Stephen Neill is a well-known leader of the Christian mission and the ecumenical movement. He is now Professor of Missions at Hamburg University. I attended his lectures on the meaning of history, when I attended the Fifth Theological Institute of East Asia Theological Schools, held at Singapore at the summer of 1963, to which he was invited as a lecturer. I was surprised to find his attitude toward mission, based on his missionary experience in India and his vast knowledge, by which he, discussing church history, tried to figure out the whole of human history from Christian perspective or Heilsgeschichte, in stead of describing the historical origin and development of the Christian church in the usual way.

This book reveals two characteristics in his discussion of non-Christian faiths today. The author intends mainly to give the Western Christians a way of understanding that will enable them to enter into dialogue with non-Christians. Dialogue can start when one takes away his own prejudice and menace to others and with deep humility opens his mind to meet them at their highest. This openness does not exclude his conviction of faith, but includes his subjective sincerity, asking the questions with challenge and judgement on what is understood by him. Following this method the author urges Christians to reflect on their present understanding of Christianity and discusses how to approach other faiths in a concrete way. This is exactly the author's way of Christian mission in the world of other faiths. Mission does not start with intolerant persuasion to one's belief, but with dialogue with other religions in humility and sincerity.

In the opening chapter, Bishop Neill comments on his methodology. The modern approach to the comparative study of religions finds its difficulty in acknowledging the personal nature of religion. One cannot launch oneself into the spirit of another religion without disloyalty to one's own. This calls for sympathy and discrimination. But one is qualified to ask adequate nature of religion, because religion is defined as an expression of man's reaction to the total human situation within which he has to live. Another difficulty of the comparative study of religions lies in the fact that its study makes the uniqueness of the Christian faith obscure. The author undertakes the dialogue frankly as a Christian who confesses Jesus Christ the one Lord of the world and admits the uniqueness and

universal validity of the Gospel. But he does not present his conviction in a dogmatic way, but in way of "dimensions, without the use of which it is not possible to speak of Christian faith at all" (p. 16). It goes around the man as exposed by Jesus Christ.

In succeeding chapters, actual dialogues with other faiths are indicated. In the Christian dialogue with Judaism, the theological problem is as to the relation of Christ and the law, the new and the old Israel. The author points out their close interrelation rather than separation, and points out the fact that the Christian approach needs reverence coupled with repentance for what Christians have done to Jews. At the same time the Christian duty in relation to Jews is not doing away with them, but encountering them with the problems of universal claim of religion, the nature of messiahship, and finally of the person of Jesus Christ.

The whole Islamic world today is going through a period of crisis. Mainly under the influence of the Western view of separation of politics and religion, the Muslim has come to have the anxiety that his dream of religio-political conquest is not only unrealized, but invalid, and to acknowledge that religion is a matter of individual decision and no concern of the state. Christians ought to be able to sympathize profoundly with Islam in crisis, because they have passed through the same crisis. The most disappointing factor in Christian-Muslim dialogue is the lack of respect and open-mindedness on the Muslim side. In spite of the apparent similarity between them in the relation of God and man, the Muslim, on a priori grounds from the words of the Koran denies the historical reality of Jesus Christ. The Christian must exercise endless patience and refuse to be discouraged in inviting true dialogue with the words, "Sir, consider Jesus" and with the task of "retirement of the emasculated Jesus from the Qur'an" (p. 69).

After characterizing renascent Hinduism as seen in Gandhi and Radhakrishnan, through whom Hinduism becomes compatible with Western thought, Bishop Neill meets Hinduism with a challenge. The Hindu understands withdrawal for individual enlightenment. He has been formed in the involuntarily given society of religious caste. He is unable to comprehend how a man can join a community of his free will and in permanence. Nor can he see why a convert should leave the community of his birth, for it seems like cultural betrayal (p. 95). The Christian responsibility for the Hindu is to help him to understand himself better and to see radical unsatisfactoriness of all the answers to questions raised by Christians, and so to point him to the Lord Jesus Christ, who provides the all-sufficient answer.

"Clearly, in Buddhism", the author says, "the Eastern reaction against the West presents itself in its most formidable and challenging form" (p. 120). The doctrines of immediacy of apprehension beyond intellectual rationalism, the high and noble ideal of Nirvana, the gospel of peace based on the teaching of Karma are attractive to the Western mind. The following are a few Christian questions to Buddhism. Can the elimination of the self be achieved so completely and so easily as some Buddhists assume? To the theory of a universe evolving from dispersed matter, the Christian would consider another possibility, that all things have their origin in Spirit. Moreover, Buddhists assume that man can be his own saviour (the author here takes mainly Hinayana Buddhism into account). But does the evidence support this view? And then Christians point out the Christian agape which goes beyond metta (benevolence).

Saying that at least 40 percent of the world's population today still live under primitive conditions, the author describes the primitive customs and practices of the people mainly in India, Africa, and South Sea Islands. Today in a time of rapid social change,

they are face to face with the crisis of their existence through detribalization, painful schism, and emergence of national loyalty. The Christian comprehension of the reality of one God, the creator, has raised a revolutionary way of thinking of man and human relationship among the people of Buganda. The idea of Jesus as the conqueror of demons, the method of mass-movement in the mission, creative fellowship of the Christian community prove to be self-evident to the mind of the primitive world.

Regarding religion as man's ultimate concern for his own life and that of others, the author includes Marxism in his consideration. After commenting briefly on the theory and achievement of Marxism, he suggests that Christians get themselves inside the skin of communists with a well-based knowledge of Marxism and of the personality of each communist who also stands in the need of grace. The Christian-Communist dialogue, then, is in regard to the significance of the individual, the true humanity, the responsible society, the material conception of the world. In the last matter, it is remarked that Christianity is not a spiritual religion, but the religion of the incarnation, and proclaims the resurrection of the body.

Existentialism is the most characteristic product of Western thought in the twentieth century. The author makes "the Existential Pilgrimage" in Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, Nietzsche, Marcel, and Bultmann. He admits that there are many things in the Existentialists that all Christians must recognize as admirable and true. Yet he calls for the fact that their truth is already contained, though not in the same terms in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The Christian may rightly ask the Existentialists to consider the meaning of the Christian communion vs. human loneliness, the pattern of human existence in the life and person of Jesus Christ vs. man himself, and life beyond death vs. man himself, and life beyond death vs. life under death.

Bishop Neill concludes his book in describing Christendom as a historically religious body and not separable from the Gospel. In the Christendom where the Christian lives the Christian faith is grasped in terms of doctrinal, institutional, traditional, and cultural contexts. The same tendencies as these can be seen in other religions. Believing the creative powers of the Gospel, Christians undertake the renewing and reforming tasks of Christendom with humble self-criticism. This will be the Christian witness and service to non-Christian religions, and open the way to dialogue with one another. The non-Christian questions in terms of Christendom are as follows. How far is Christendom a genuinely international body? Do the Christian churches really produce such community as they profess? Is Christian thought compatible with the modern-minded criticism? Are the Christians willing to accept new light, from whatever direction it may come, and to believe that other faiths may enshrine truths to which they have been blind? Each of these questions is fairly answered by the author. To the last question, he remarks that "they believe that all truth is present in Christ, but they are bound also to admit their blindness, and to recognize that they have sometimes owed to critics and enemies the discovery of vital truth that was all the time implicit in the life and teaching of Christ" (p. 228). At any rate, the Christians are not allowed to say, "Look at Christ, and do not look at us". When they invite friends of other faiths to look at Christ, they must do so with a full sense of responsibility for what it may mean for those who always ask, "What manner of men ought ye to be?" (2 Pet. 3:11).

Throughout the book, the author seems to describe fairly the way of Christian dialogue with other faiths on the basis of the evangelical faith coupled with sound evaluation of other religions although some of them are my sketches. Yet the reader may wonder on

what theological basis these dialogues are possible. The author, to be sure, emphasizes open-mindedness and subjective sincerity of the Christian to other religions. But he scarcely explains the relation of the truth, of the Lordship of Christ and the truths maintained by other faiths. Without this, one can hardly find the vital truth explicit in Christ owing to criticism by other religions (cf. p. 228 as above-quoted). (Akio Dohi)

W. A. Visser't Hooft, NO OTHER NAME. The choice between syncretism and Christian Universalism London : SCM Press Ltd., 1963

This book is small (128 pages), and is extremely concise in its content. The reader will be impressed with the vigour and zeal of the author in his attempt to convince us of the centrality and universality of the Christ-event.

The author has chosen this particular subject because he feels that "we need greater clarity on the future of syncretism and on the attitude which the ecumenical movement should adopt to it" (p. 7). The author judges that this is precisely the time for us to confront the question of syncretism. We must do so because there is real danger that we may find ourselves before long exceedingly rich in religion and exceedingly poor in real Christianity (p. 9). And also there is a growing awareness of the one world and of the need to find a centre of cohesion capable of providing unity for the whole human family, which eventually leads us to develop one universal world-religion.

The book is divided into three parts : syncretism, ancient and modern, the New Testament's struggle with syncretism, and one for all, and once for all. Before going into discussions, he defines syncretism as "the view which holds that there is no unique revelation in history, that there are many different ways to reach the divine reality, that all formulations of religious truth or experience are by their very nature inadequate expressions of that truth and that it is necessary to harmonize as much as possible all religious ideas and experiences so as to create one universal religion for mankind" (p. 11).

In the first part, the author describes the various forms which syncretism has taken in history and which it takes to-day. He gives a brief history of syncretism in its bearing upon the life of the Church. Four syncretistic waves are presented. The first took place in the last century before the Exile. The second found its climax in the days of the Roman Empire. This is the most formidable and comprehensive movement of intermingling and combination of diverse religions that has ever taken place in history. The third wave is that which broke over Europe in the eighteenth century. With the fourth wave we are confronted to-day. Then, the author turns to the syncretistic movements in the East, and on to syncretistic movements and sects. Concluding this part, the author states that in many syncretisms there prevails the common assumption that "there are many ways to God and that God is too great, too unknowable to reveal himself in a single revelation and once for all" (p. 48). It is, thus, a revolt against the uniqueness of revelation in history. In that assumption, true universality is only to be gained if the claim of revelation in a particular person at a particular time is given up.

In the second part, he describes first the conflicts of the early Church with syncretism. Simon in Samaria, the events which took place in the city of Artemis during Paul's visit to Ephesus, Colossian attempt to add to their individual gospel a cosmic gospel, the city of Pergamon in the Book of Revelation and others are referred to in their bearing on syncretism. Is New Testament terminology syncretistic? To this question, the author answers